

## 1 HOUSE BILL NO. 341

2 INTRODUCED BY J. ANDERSEN

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING MONEY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
5 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR ADDITIONAL LOCAL OMBUDSMAN SERVICES FOR ELDERLY  
6 MONTANANS UNDER THE OFFICE OF LEGAL AND LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN SERVICES."

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8 WHEREAS, local ombudsman services are an integral part of providing a wide range of services for  
9 older Montana citizens as mandated by the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, and the Montana Older  
10 Americans Act, Title 52, chapter 3, part 5; and

11 WHEREAS, according to the 2000 Census, the population of rural Montana has increased to 117,239,  
12 and 15,329 or 1.7% of elderly residents are over 85 years of age; and

13 WHEREAS, Montanans over 65 years of age account for 13.41% of the population and that percentage  
14 will only increase as the Baby Boom generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, reaches retirement age;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, the availability and access to services is diminishing as more and more Montanans are  
17 reaching 65 years of age and becoming eligible for Medicare and Medicaid; and

18 WHEREAS, residents of long-term care facilities and their family members require assistance in dealing  
19 with problems of daily care, quality of life, and resident's rights; and

20 WHEREAS, the best way to provide assistance is at the local level by trained persons such as the  
21 ombudsmen who are in the facilities on a regular basis and who may be called to private assisted living facilities,  
22 group homes, and private homes; and

23 WHEREAS, there is a need for monitoring caretakers, such as family and nursing homes, so that the  
24 elderly have someone to whom they can report any abuse without fear of retaliation; and

25 WHEREAS, the need for information on ombudsman services for the elderly is necessary in maintaining  
26 the quality of care and life of Montanan's aging population.

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28 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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30 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Appropriation.** There is appropriated \$240,000 from the general fund to

1 the department of public health and human services for each of fiscal years 2004 and 2005 for the purpose of  
2 providing additional local ombudsman services under the office of legal and long-term care ombudsman  
3 services, as provided for in Title 52, chapter 3, part 6.

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